

Message Text

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10

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-07 SCS-03 SCA-01 SSO-00 /088 W

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P 161630Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4408

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 0354

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LU, US

SUBJ: LUXEMBOURG REACTION TO MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT

REF: STATE 113030

1. FOLLOWING IS A RESUME OF SOME POLITICAL, GOVERNMENTAL AND PRESS REACTIONS TO THE US INTERVENTION TO FREE THE MAYAGUEZ CREW. SOCIALIST STATE SECRETARY FOR LABOR MAURICE THOSS TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE KHMER ROUGE HAD DELIBERATELY PROVOKED A US REACTION BECAUSE OF THEIR DESIRE TO "TWEAK AMERICA'S NOSE." AFTER DCM MADE POINTS IN REFTEL, MFA SECRETARY GENERAL PIERRE WURTH RESPONDED THAT "THE US WAS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT TO ACT AS IT DID TO FREE THE CREW". WURTH DID EXPRESS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT US/THAI RELATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT DAMAGED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE INCIDENT. FRENCH AMBASSADOR LUC AND BRITISH AMBASSADOR ROPER ALSO COMMENTED US ACTION FAVORABLY TO THE AMBASSADOR. LUC SAID THAT "US INTERVENTION WAS THE BEST THING US HAD DONE IN INDOCHINA IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS". ROPER TERMED THE US INTERVENTION "VERY WISE" AND APPLAUDED THE US "RESISTANCE TO AN UNACCEPTABLE PROVOCATION." BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

2. LOCAL PRESS TREATMENT OF THE INCIDENT WAS EXTENSIVE
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WITH EDITORIAL COMMENT HIGHLIGHTING THE PRESIDENT'S

PERSONAL SUCCESS IN AUTHORIZING THE SUCCESSFUL MAYAGUEZ
OPERATION. A LEADING RTL TV NEWS COMMENTATOR SAID THAT
THE PRESIDENT "POUNDED ON THE TABLE, WON HIS BET AND
GAINED THE SUPPORT OF US PUBLIC OPINION". IN A FRONT
PAGE EDITORIAL IN THE LUXEMBOURG EDITION OF THE
REPUBLICAIN LORRAIN, FRENCH JOURNALIST GEORGES SUFFERT
WROTE THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S PERSONAL SUCCESS WAS A
SECONDARY CONSIDERATION IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE
MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT. WHAT REALLY COUNTS, SAID SUFFERT,
"IS THAT THE TIGER SLEEPING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC
IS NOT ALWAYS A PAPER ONE. HE STILL IS ABLE TO REACT.
MR. FORD HAS JUST KINDLY REMINDED THE REST OF THE WORLD
THAT THE US STILL EXISTS".
END UNCLASSIFIED.FARKAS

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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